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# USDA Inside Information

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## JUST FOR YOU

More on volcano damage...a workshop for inventors...radio value and air time...whatever happened to the old Farm and Home Hour stuff...notes about upcoming conferences...and a saga of modern television reporting. And there's more....

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## OUT NEAR ST. HELENS

You've no doubt been reading many of the reports about Mt. St. Helens...some of which contain agricultural loss assessments, some of which don't. GPA's Roger Sandman has been issuing daily papers about the volcano activity and we thought you might like some of the findings he's been reporting.

So far, Federal Crop Insurance liability on apples is \$3 million though full damage can't be assessed yet. Some quality reduction may take place...some cultural practices in apples have been delayed. The ash on the leaves limits the effectiveness of chemicals. Also the dust inhibits the activity of beneficial predatory insects that feed on mites. So additional application of chemicals probably will be needed...increasing the cost of harvest considerable.

Alfalfa, a non-insured crop, apparently has suffered the most damage of all crops at this stage. The crop is ready to cut and is weighted down by the ash. Some alfalfa has molded beneath the ash...some hay that has been baled into bales of 150-200 pounds contains up to 20% grit...reportedly unpalatable.

Some irrigated wheat was lodged by the fallout of ash...and the ash also sealed the surface so irrigation water will not penetrate without cultivation. Soil temperature has decreased up to 4° by the sealing effect of the ash, so row crop producers are cultivating to aerate the soil and increase the temperature.

As of Tuesday of this week, ash damage to crops was estimated to be more than \$100 million in nine Washington counties...could potentially harm crops in eight Idaho counties.

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## THE OUTLOOK ON OUTLOOK

From Jack Roney of the World Food Board comes the word that Nov. 17-20 will be the dates for the Department's 57th annual Outlook Conference. Again Jack will be directing the conference.

He's also appointed some folks to the information committee. Sally Michael of his staff will chair it...and be joined by Polly Cica, Science and Education Administration; Diane Decker, Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service; Sebastian Fillipone, Agricultural Marketing Service; Barry Jenkins, GPA; Don Looper, Foreign Agricultural Service; and Rollie Olson, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

They'll be handling preparations, publicity and press relations for Outlook '81...which draws about 1,000 folks from the trade, government and academia, plus 100 or so members of the press.

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WELL, WHY NOT?

Now we've seen everything, almost!

We got a copy of a newsletter issued by the National Bureau of Standards and decided to thumb through it to see what we could find. Several items appeared interesting, but we were brought up with a start on the last page by a headline: "Workshop for Inventors Scheduled."

Yep, that's right. The NBS Office of Energy-Related Inventions is cosponsoring a series of regional workshops to help individual inventors and small businesses improve their innovative capabilities. And why not? Sounds like a good idea to us.

Oh yes, if you want to attend, contact Jennie Covahey, (301) 921-3181. Future dates and places: Boston (June 20-21); Atlanta (Sept. dates to be announced); Dallas-Ft. Worth (Oct. 31-Nov. 1); and Philadelphia (Nov. dates to be announced).

And the other cosponsor is the American Association of Engineering Societies.

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CONSERVING HISTORY OR RECORDING CONSERVATION

A conference that might be a little closer related to agricultural matters comes to Washington, D.C., June 13-14. It's a joint meeting of the National Assoc. of Conservation Districts and the National Trust for Historic Preservation...called "Rural Conservation." Headquarters for the meeting will be the Capital Hilton Hotel, but there's also a tour planned of nearby Loudon Co., Va.

For details about the conference, check with Victor E. Muniec, Director of Comm for NACD. His telephone is (202) 347-5995.

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FORWARD, ED!

Ed Poe, GPA, has just been elected vice-chairman of a newly organized group called the Federal Publishers Committee. The committee, composed of inf officers from various departments and independent agencies, aims to improve publications management in the Federal gov't...in all aspects.

Have at it folks...and lottsa luck! (By the way, did you know Ed's full name is Edgar Allen Poe? That should help.)

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TRACKING DOWN THAT  
"BEAUTIFUL DAY"

Retiree Layne Beaty writes...and he just lives across town... that when Bill Drips, former director of ag for NBC, died, he left some of his National Farm and Home Hour materials to Michigan State U. Since Layne has been searching for such records, he wrote Bill's widow, Josephine, to see if she still had any.

Josephine wrote back saying some are at Iowa State U., where Bill taught from 1920 to around 1924. So...if any of you scholars out there are digging into the history of the National Farm and Home Hour, Layne says he now knows where most of it is...MSU, Iowa State, and the National Ag. Library here. Layne says Everett Mitchell also may have some at his home in Wheaton, Ill. If you want more details, write Layne at 1449 Forty-fourth St., N.W., Washington 20007.

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A REPORT OF A REPORT

These kinds of reports always befuddle us...don't quite know what to make of them. At least now we know we've had something used.

We're talking about the tendency of some broadcasting stations and networks to report use of our materials and the estimated air-time value of them.

Latest we've received comes from the CBS Radio Network...which says that last year it used 104 announcements with a total impressions of 83,928,000 and at a commercial value of about \$145,500.

If any of you have a way of considering such reports, let us hear from you.

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OUT WITH YOUR  
BLUE PENCILS

Nelson Fitton, GPA, sends the note below to all Washington area inf folks:

"Ray Jenkins, special assistant to the President, will speak and present awards at the Blue Pencil Awards luncheon, sponsored by the National Assoc. of Gov't Communicators, on Thursday, June 19, at the Rosslyn Westpark Hotel (formerly the Ramada Inn), 1900 Ft. Myer Drive, Rosslyn, Va.

"USDA usually wins awards at this annual luncheon and stands a chance of winning a number...this year.

"The luncheon will begin at noon and will cost \$11 per person. Those wanting to attend can make reservations by calling Elinor Stokes on (703) 532-8527." (Sorry you folks away from D.C. It probably is a little far to travel for lunch. But if you're in town, you're welcome to attend.)

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FLAT OUT OF  
"SPEAK UP..."

Well...when some of us and the U. of Georgia heard that the new TV show, "Speak Up America," wanted to interview someone about a couple of research projects that had received an

unnamed politician's award having to do with sheep...well, we tried to be cooperative. In fact, it was an opportunity to explain things, we figured.

So...a crew came to D.C. to interview a scientist from Georgia... director of the Station, Bill Flatt. He came up and did a masterful job explaining his state's study. Georgia also issued a press release announcing the airing and explaining further the purposes and results of the study.

"Speak Up America" was broadcast as scheduled...we don't know about the viewing audience, but some of us stuck it out through to the bitter end, for two whole hours, a week apart, hoping to see Bill Flatt. Right...no Bill Flatt, no mention whatsoever. Hot dawg! Everything else was pitsville for sure.

Now we hear from Bill Flatt...along with a resolution passed by the Southern Directors of Agricultural Experiment Stations, including: "...we collectively and individually shall refrain from mass viewing and mob actions...and...hereby declare...our esteem and respect for William P. Flatt...."

Even so, let's all hope the show has been canceled.

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WNATA JOB? TRY IOWA

Lee Thompson, Iowa State U., sends word that he's looking for a communication specialist for radio-television work by Sept. 1.

The person hired will pick subjects for radio-TV reports, arrange for interviews and recordings with specialists, select and edit news for a daily farm radio show, organize and conduct interviews for tape services and organize and present short TV reports on a daily basis.

A bachelor's degree is required, with broadcast emphasis preferred. A master's degree is desired--would need to be earned within 6 years. For a BS/BA graduate, at least 6 years in radio/TV required, preferably related to agriculture; for MA/MS grad, at least 2 years in radio/TV, also preferably related to agriculture.

If interested, send a letter of application and up-to-date resume to Leon E. Thompson, 103 Morrill Hall, Iowa State U., Ames, Iowa 50011. Or call him at (515) 294-4923. Deadline for applicants is July 1 or until the position is filled.